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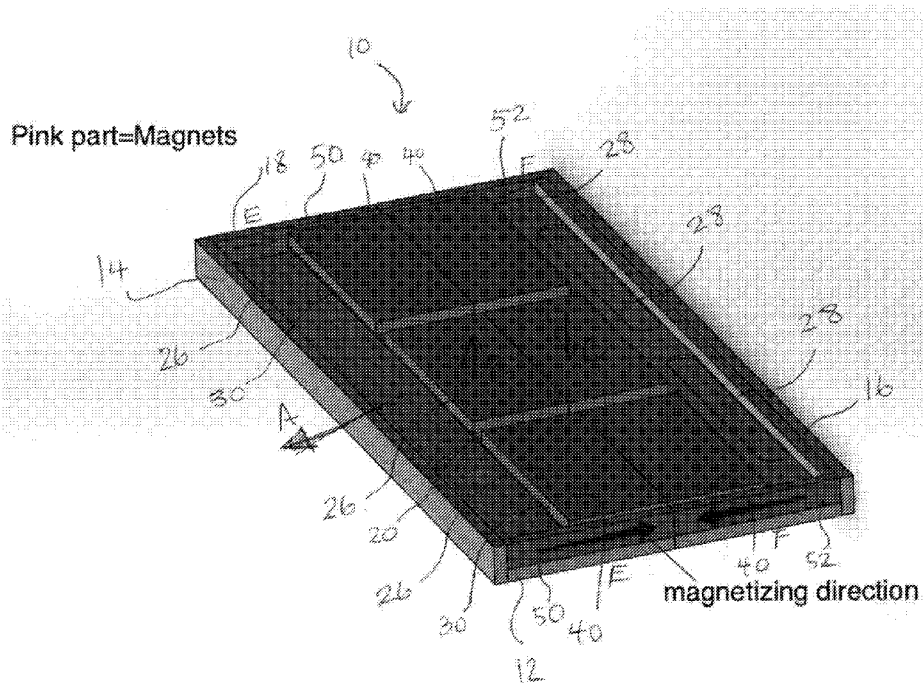
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(54) Title: LOUDSPEAKER

Fig. 1



(57) Abstract: A loudspeaker is provided with a motor assembly having at least one planar coil and first and second magnets magnetized in a magnetized direction perpendicular to direction of coil movement and perpendicular to a central axis of radiation of the loudspeaker. Ferrofluid is disposed between a diaphragm and the first and second magnets. Third and fourth magnets are disposed outside the first and second magnets and are magnetized in a direction parallel to the direction of coil movement and perpendicular to the magnetized direction of the first and second speakers.



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- *as to applicant's entitlement to apply for and be granted a patent (Rule 4.17(ii))*
- *as to the applicant's entitlement to claim the priority of the earlier application (Rule 4.17(iii))*

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LOUDSPEAKER

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

[0001] This application claims the benefit of U.S. provisional application Serial No. 62/639,699 filed March 7, 2018, the disclosure of which is hereby incorporated in its entirety by reference herein.

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0002] This application relates loudspeakers having a magnet and a moving-coil electrodynamic motor with ferrofluid.

SUMMARY

[0003] According to at least one embodiment, a loudspeaker is provided with a speaker frame. A motor assembly is provided in the speaker frame having at least one planar coil. First and second magnets are magnetized in a magnetized direction perpendicular to a direction of coil movement and perpendicular to a central axis of radiation of the loudspeaker. A ferrofluid is provided in the speaker housing to dampen vibrations.

[0004] In another embodiment, a diaphragm is connected to at least one of the first and second magnets. The ferrofluid is disposed between the diaphragm and the first and second magnets.

[0005] In another embodiment, the ferrofluid is in contact with the diaphragm. In response to the diaphragm vibrating, the ferrofluid dampens resonant frequency vibrations of the diaphragm.

[0006] In another embodiment, a membrane surrounds the first and second magnets, wherein the ferrofluid is disposed within the membrane and isolated along surfaces of the magnets.

[0007] In another embodiment, third and fourth magnets are disposed outside the first and second magnets and magnetized in a direction parallel to the direction of coil movement and perpendicular to the magnetized direction of the first and second magnets.

[0008] In another embodiment, the ferrofluid comprises magnetic particles suspended in a liquid carrier.

[0009] In another embodiment, the first and second magnets each have upper and lower large surface faces separated by a narrowest dimension. The first and second magnets are magnetized across the narrowest dimension in first and second magnetized directions being opposite. The planar coil is arranged in a plane along at least one of the upper and lower large surface faces. The direction of coil movement is parallel to the plane of the coil.

[0010] In another embodiment, the planar coil has first and second planar coils. The first and second planar coils are each positioned parallel to and along the upper and lower large surfaces respectively.

[0011] In another embodiment, the first and second magnets each include at least two magnets spaced apart in a height direction by an air gap. The height direction is perpendicular to the direction of coil movement and perpendicular to the narrowest magnet dimension.

[0012] In another embodiment, the first and second magnets are arranged in-line between a front grill and a back wall, wherein a depth of the loudspeaker is defined between the front grill and the back wall.

[0013] According to at least one other embodiment, a method of operating a loudspeaker is provided. A motor assembly is provided having first and second magnets each having upper and lower large surface faces separated by a narrowest dimension. The first and second magnets are magnetized across the narrowest dimension in first and second magnetized directions being opposite. A ferrofluid is provided in contact with at least one of the first and second magnets. A first coil is positioned along at least one of the upper and lower large surfaces. The first coil is energized and in response to energizing, the first coil moves in a direction of coil movement being perpendicular to the first and second magnetized directions. A vibration is dampened with the ferrofluid.

[0014] In another embodiment, the method includes arranging first and second magnets in-line in the direction of coil movement.

[0015] In another embodiment, the method includes positioning third and fourth magnets outside the first and second magnets. The third and fourth magnets are magnetized in a direction parallel to the direction of coil movement and perpendicular to the first and second magnetized directions.

[0016] In another embodiment, the method includes positioning a second coil along at the other of the upper and lower large surfaces. The first and second coils are energized and in response to energizing, the first and second coils move in the direction of coil movement being perpendicular to the first and second magnetized directions.

[0017] In another embodiment, the method includes providing the ferrofluid disposed between a diaphragm and the first and second magnets.

[0018] According to at least one other embodiment, a loudspeaker is provided having at least one coil. A first set of magnets is magnetized in a first magnetized direction. A second set of magnets is positioned adjacent the first set of magnets and magnetized in a second magnetized direction being opposite the first magnetized direction. The first and second magnetized directions are perpendicular to a direction of coil movement and perpendicular to an axis of radiation of the loudspeaker. The loudspeaker has a diaphragm connected to the coil and a ferrofluid is disposed between the magnets and the diaphragm to dampen vibrations.

[0019] In another embodiment, a front grill of the loudspeaker encloses the loudspeaker through which the axis of radiation extends. The first and second magnetized directions are generally parallel to the front grill of the loudspeaker. The axis of radiation is generally parallel to the direction of coil movement. The first set of magnets is positioned closer to the grill than the second set of magnets in the direction of coil movement.

[0020] In another embodiment, the at least one coil comprises first and second coils. The first and second coils are separated by the narrowest magnet face dimension.

[0021] In another embodiment, the third and fourth magnets disposed outside the first and second magnets and are magnetized in a direction parallel to the direction of coil movement and perpendicular to the magnetized direction of the first and second magnets.

[0022] In another embodiment, the diaphragm is positioned closer to the first set of magnets than the second set of magnets.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0023] Figure 1 is a perspective view of a portion of a loudspeaker according to one embodiment.

[0024] Figure 2 is another perspective view of a portion of the loudspeaker of Figure 1.

[0025] Figure 3 is a cross-section view of the loudspeaker through section 3-3 of Figure of Figure 2.

[0026] Figure 4 is a top view of the loudspeaker of Figure 2 showing a top view of the magnets.

[0027] Figure 5 is a side cross-section view of the loudspeaker through section 5-5 of Figure of Figure 2.

[0028] Figure 6 illustrates the strength of the magnetic field in the ferrofluid.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[0029] As required, detailed embodiments of the present invention are disclosed herein; however, it is to be understood that the disclosed embodiments are merely exemplary of the invention that may be embodied in various and alternative forms. The figures are not necessarily to scale; some features may be exaggerated or minimized to show details of particular components. Therefore, specific structural and functional details disclosed herein are not to be interpreted as limiting, but merely as a representative basis for teaching one skilled in the art to variously employ the present invention. Other embodiments may be utilized, and other changes may be made, without departing from the spirit or scope of the subject matter presented here. It will be readily understood that the aspects of the present disclosure, as generally described herein, and illustrated in the figures, can be arranged, substituted, combined, and designed in a wide variety of different configurations, all of which are explicitly contemplated and make part of this disclosure.

[0030] An electrodynamic motor in a loudspeaker includes a voice coil and a magnet assembly that generates a constant magnetic field. An alternating current corresponding to electrical signals conveying audio signals is provided to the voice coil. When current flows through the voice coil, the coil interacts with the constant magnetic field and results in movement of the voice coil. This interaction results in the force F , expressed as a product of the magnetic flux density B , the overall length of the voice coil's turns linked to the magnetic flux l , and the value of the electrical current running through the voice coil I , according to the formula $F=B \cdot I \cdot l$. Due to the force acting on the voice coil wire positioned in the constant magnetic field, the alternating current actuates the voice coil to moves back and forth and, accordingly, moves the diaphragm to which the voice coil (or coil former) is attached. The reciprocating diaphragm produces acoustic signals that propagate as sound waves through air.

[0031] One example of a moving coil loudspeaker is U.S. Patent No. 9,100,738 by Harman International Industries. An example of a loudspeaker using ferrofluid is disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 7,136,501 by Harman International Industries.

[0032] Loudspeakers generally include a motor having a magnet. The magnet has two poles that produce a magnetic field between the two poles. A moving coil is formed by turns of conductive coil. When current flows through the coil, the coil is subject to magnetic field and force is generated which results in movement of the coil. When current flows through the coil, the coil is subject to magnetic field and force is generated which results in movement of the coil in accordance with the formula $F=B \cdot I \cdot L$ (where B is the intensity of induction or magnetic field, I is the intensity of current and L is the length of the conductor subject to the magnetic field).

[0033] Figure 1 illustrates a perspective view of a loudspeaker 10 with a portion of a housing removed in order to view the internal motor and magnet architecture. The housing 12 includes a front grill 14 having a plurality of apertures through which acoustic radiation radiates. The front grill 14 provides protection for other loudspeaker components. The housing 12 also includes a back wall 16 that encloses the rear of the loudspeaker 10. The depth D of the speaker 10 is defined between the front grill 14 and the back wall 16. In one embodiment, the depth D of the loudspeaker 10 may range from 10-25mm. However other depth dimensions may be possible.

[0034] The housing 12 may also have a frame 18 that defines side walls of the loudspeaker 10 and connects the front grill 14 to the back wall 16. As shown in the Figures, the frame 18 may be generally cylindrical and have an elongated oval, or race-track cross section with circular ends connecting elongated sides. In other embodiments, the frame may be elliptical or circular shaped. However, any suitable frame shape may be used.

[0035] The loudspeaker 10 includes at least one moving coil 20 connected to a diaphragm 24. The coil 20 moves in direction indicated by arrow A. The direction of movement is generally perpendicular to the front grill 14. A ferrofluid is disposed between the diaphragm and magnets of the electro-dynamic loudspeaker in order to dampen the resonance frequency of the device. Copending International Application No. PCT/US2018/021319 by Harman International Industries also discloses a loudspeaker with a moving coil, the disclosure of which is hereby incorporated by reference.

[0036] A plurality of magnets 26, 28 are mounted to the frame 18. The diaphragm 24 is mounted to the frame 18 and the ferrofluid 32 is disposed between the diaphragm 24 and the magnets 26, 28 and contacts a lower surface 46 of the diaphragm 24. The ferrofluid 32 is in contact with the diaphragm 24 so that as the diaphragm 24 vibrates, the contact with the ferrofluid 32 dampens the vibration.

[0037] The ferrofluid is a stable colloidal suspension of sub-domain magnetic particles in a liquid carrier. The ferrofluid dampens the resonant frequency of the diaphragm in order to reduce distortion and smooth frequency response.

[0038] The ferrofluid 32 is maintained on the surface of the magnets 26, 28 by the magnetic field attracting the ferrous fluid. A membrane 48 surrounds the magnets 26, 28 in order to isolate the ferrofluid along the surfaces of the magnets 26, 28. The ferrofluid 32 can be provided along all, or only selective magnets. For example, putting ferrofluid only along the outermost magnets 26, 28 may provide sufficient dampening.

[0039] The loudspeaker 10 includes planar magnets that are magnetized in direction being perpendicular to the motion of the coil. As shown in Figure 1, the loudspeaker 10 has a first magnet 26, or set of magnets. The first magnets 26 are magnetized in a direction B being perpendicular to

the direction of coil motion A. The loudspeaker 10 has a second magnet 28, or second set of magnets abutting the first magnets 26 and magnetized in a direction C, opposite direction B and also perpendicular to the direction of coil motion A. The magnets 26, 28 are oriented with the smallest face 30 parallel to the front grill 14 and perpendicular to direction A and the movement of the coil 20.

[0040] The loudspeaker 10 also includes planar magnets that are magnetized in direction being parallel to the motion of the coil. As shown in Figure 1, the loudspeaker 10 has a third pair of magnets 50, or set of magnets. The third magnets 50 are magnetized in a direction E being parallel to the direction of coil motion A and away from the front grill 14. The loudspeaker 10 has a fourth pair of magnets 52, or set of magnets abutting the third magnets 50 and magnetized in a direction F, opposite direction E and also parallel to the direction of coil motion A. The magnets 50, 52 are positioned along the side walls of the frame 18 outside of the first and second magnets 26, 28. The magnets 50, 52 are magnetized in directions D, E that intersect adjacent the centerline 56 of the coils 20, 22.

[0041] The loudspeaker 10 may have more than one coil. For example, Figure 2 illustrates another perspective view of the loudspeaker 10, similar to Figure 1 but where two moving coils 20 are shown. A first coil 20 is positioned on one side of the magnets 26, 28 and a second coil 22 is positioned on an opposite side of the magnets 26, 28.

[0042] Figure 3 is a cross-section view of the loudspeaker 10 through section 3-3 of Figure of Figure 2. As shown in Figure 3, the magnets 26, 28 are positioned between the two coils 20, 22. The speaker has a narrow width W since the coils are separated by the smallest dimension 30 of the magnets 26, 28. The width W of the speaker, and consequently the front grill opening 14, may be approximately 3mm. The speaker 10 and front grill opening 14 may have a height H defined between the side walls being approximately 30mm to 60mm. The width W and height H may be other suitable dimensions based on speaker characteristics.

[0043] Figure 4 is top view of the loudspeaker 10 of Figure 1 showing a top view of the magnets 26, 28 and the loudspeaker 10. The diaphragm 24 is connected to the coils through a former 34 (the coils are not shown in this view). In order to convert force moving the coil 20, 22 into an acoustic pressure wave, the diaphragm 24 is connected and can move the air with the enclosure.

[0044] The spaces 36 between the magnets 26, 28 allow for ferrofluid flow as the coils 20, 22 and diaphragm 24 move. The first magnets 26 are positioned parallel and closer to the diaphragm 24. The second magnets 28 are positioned adjacent to the magnets 26 and closer to the back wall 16.

[0045] The coils 20, 22 are planar coils oriented parallel to the largest surface 40, 44 of the magnets in order to optimize magnet efficiency since the efficiency of neodymium magnets depends on the surface area. This configuration of magnets and coils also optimizes the force factor (BL factor) for a thin loudspeaker and improves that sound pressure level (SPL) for the same sized driver.

[0046] Figure 5 is a side cross-section view of the loudspeaker 10 through section 5-5 of Figure of Figure 2.

[0047] The speaker 10 may have coils 20, 22 positioned on each side of the magnets 26, 28. The coils 20, 22 are positioned outboard of the pole pieces 39. In another embodiment, the speaker 10 may only have one coil 20 disposed on one side of the magnets 26, 28. The coils 20, 22 are connected to the diaphragm 24 and move in a direction A. In another embodiment, it is possible to have more than one or multiple coils 20, 22 positioned on one side or both side of the magnet 26, 28.

[0048] As shown in Figure 5, the first magnets 26 are magnetized in a direction B being perpendicular to the direction of coil motion A. The second magnets 28 are magnetized in a direction C, opposite direction B and also perpendicular to the direction of coil motion A. The magnets 26, 28 are magnetized in a direction between the largest faces 40, 44. The magnets 26, 28 are magnetized across the smallest dimension 30.

[0049] Figure 6 illustrates the strength of the magnetic field in the ferrofluid 32 due to the magnets 50, 52. As shown in Figure 6, the magnetic field is strong along the centerline 56 of the coil.

[0050] While exemplary embodiments are described above, it is not intended that these embodiments describe all possible forms of the invention. Rather, the words used in the specification are words of description rather than limitation, and it is understood that various changes may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. Additionally, the

features of various implementing embodiments may be combined to form further embodiments of the invention.

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A loudspeaker comprising:
a speaker frame;
a motor assembly provided in the speaker frame having at least one planar coil; and
first and second magnets magnetized in a magnetized direction perpendicular to a direction of coil movement and perpendicular to a central axis of radiation of the loudspeaker; and
a ferrofluid provided in the speaker housing to dampen vibrations.
2. The loudspeaker of claim 1, further comprising a diaphragm connected to at least one of the first and second magnets, wherein the ferrofluid is disposed between the diaphragm and the first and second magnets.
3. The loudspeaker of claim 2, wherein the ferrofluid is in contact with the diaphragm, and in response to the diaphragm vibrating, the ferrofluid dampens resonant frequency vibrations of a of the diaphragm.
4. The loudspeaker of claim 1, further comprising a membrane surrounding the first and second magnets, wherein the ferrofluid is disposed within the membrane and isolated along surfaces of the magnets.
5. The loudspeaker of claim 1, further comprising third and fourth magnets disposed outside the first and second magnets and magnetized in a direction parallel to the direction of coil movement and perpendicular to the magnetized direction of the first and second magnets.
6. The loudspeaker of claim 1, wherein the ferrofluid comprises magnetic particles suspended in a liquid carrier.
7. The loudspeaker of claim 1 wherein the first and second magnets each have upper and lower large surface faces separated by a narrowest dimension, wherein the first and second magnets are magnetized across the narrowest dimension in first and second magnetized directions being opposite,

wherein the at least one planar coil is arranged in a plane along at least one of the upper and lower large surface faces, wherein the direction of coil movement is parallel to the plane of the coil.

8. The loudspeaker of claim 7, wherein the at least one planar coil comprises first and second planar coils, wherein the first and second planar coils are each positioned parallel to and along the upper and lower large surfaces respectively.

9. The loudspeaker of claim 7, wherein the first and second magnets each include at least two magnets spaced apart in a height direction by an air gap, wherein the height direction is perpendicular to the direction of coil movement and perpendicular to the narrowest magnet dimension.

10. The loudspeaker of claim 1, wherein the first and second magnets are arranged in-line between a front grill and a back wall, wherein a depth of the loudspeaker is defined between the front grill and the back wall.

11. A method of operating a loudspeaker comprising:
providing a motor assembly having first and second magnets each having upper and lower large surface faces separated by a narrowest dimension, wherein the first and second magnets are magnetized across the narrowest dimension in first and second magnetized directions being opposite;

providing a ferrofluid in contact with at least one of the first and second magnets;
positioning a first coil along at least one of the upper and lower large surfaces;
energizing the first coil, wherein in response to energizing, the first coil moves in a direction of coil movement being perpendicular to the first and second magnetized directions; and
dampening a vibration with the ferrofluid.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising arranging first and second magnets in-line in the direction of coil movement.

13. The method of claim 11, further comprising:

positioning third and fourth magnets outside the first and second magnets, the third and fourth magnets magnetized in a direction parallel to the direction of coil movement and perpendicular to the first and second magnetized directions.

14. The method of claim 11, further comprising:
positioning a second coil along at the other of the upper and lower large surfaces; and
energizing the first and second coils,
wherein in response to energizing, the first and second coils move in the direction of coil movement being perpendicular to the first and second magnetized directions.

15. The method of claim 11, further comprising:
providing the ferrofluid disposed between a diaphragm and the first and second magnets.

16. A loudspeaker comprising:
at least one coil;
a first set of magnets magnetized in a first magnetized direction;
a second set of magnets positioned adjacent the first set of magnets and magnetized in a second magnetized direction being opposite the first magnetized direction, wherein the first and second magnetized directions are perpendicular to a direction of coil movement and perpendicular to an axis of radiation of the loudspeaker,
a diaphragm connected to the coil; and
a ferrofluid disposed between the magnets and the diaphragm to dampen vibrations.

17. The loudspeaker of claim 16, further comprising a front grill of the loudspeaker enclosing the loudspeaker through which the axis of radiation extends, wherein the first and second magnetized directions are generally parallel to the front grill of the loudspeaker; and
wherein the axis of radiation is generally parallel to the direction of coil movement
wherein the first set of magnets is positioned closer to the grill than the second set of magnets in the direction of coil movement.

18. The loudspeaker of claim 16, wherein the at least one coil comprises first and second coils, wherein the first and second coils are separated by the narrowest magnet face dimension.

19. The loudspeaker of claim 16, further comprising third and fourth magnets disposed outside the first and second magnets and magnetized in a direction parallel to the direction of coil movement and perpendicular to the magnetized direction of the first and second magnets.

20. The loudspeaker of claim 16, wherein the diaphragm is positioned closer to the first set of magnets than the second set of magnets.

Fig. 1

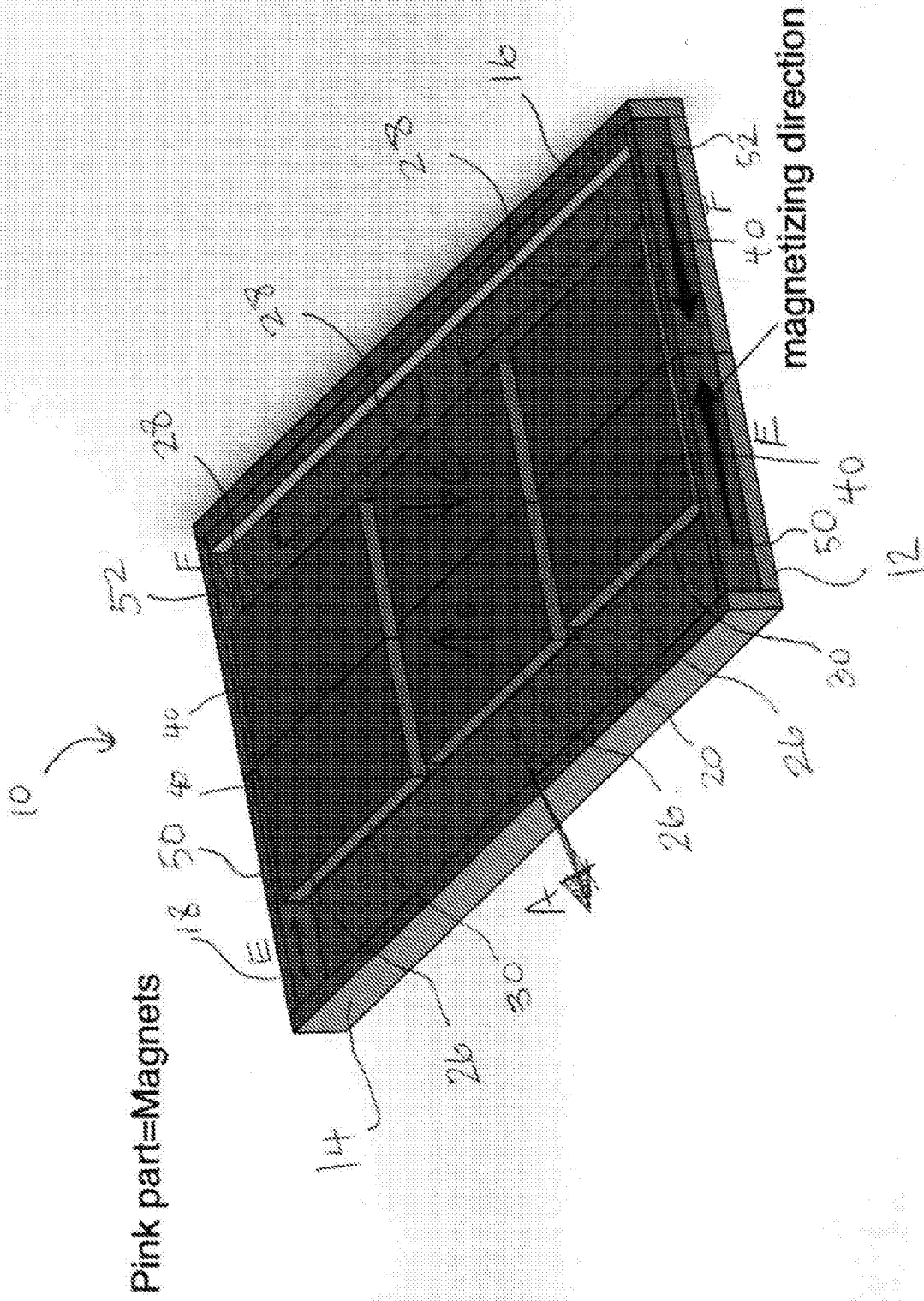
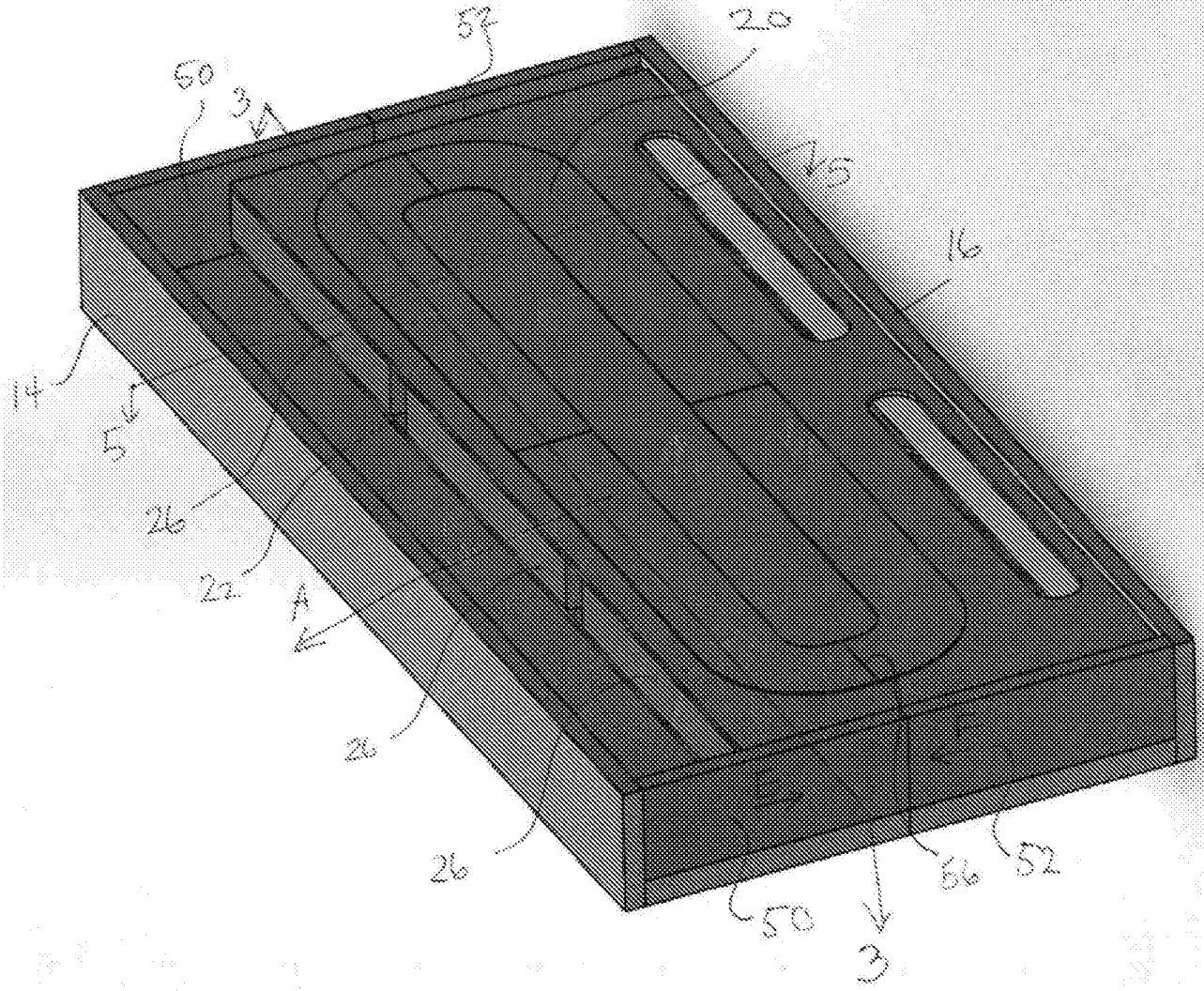


Fig. 2



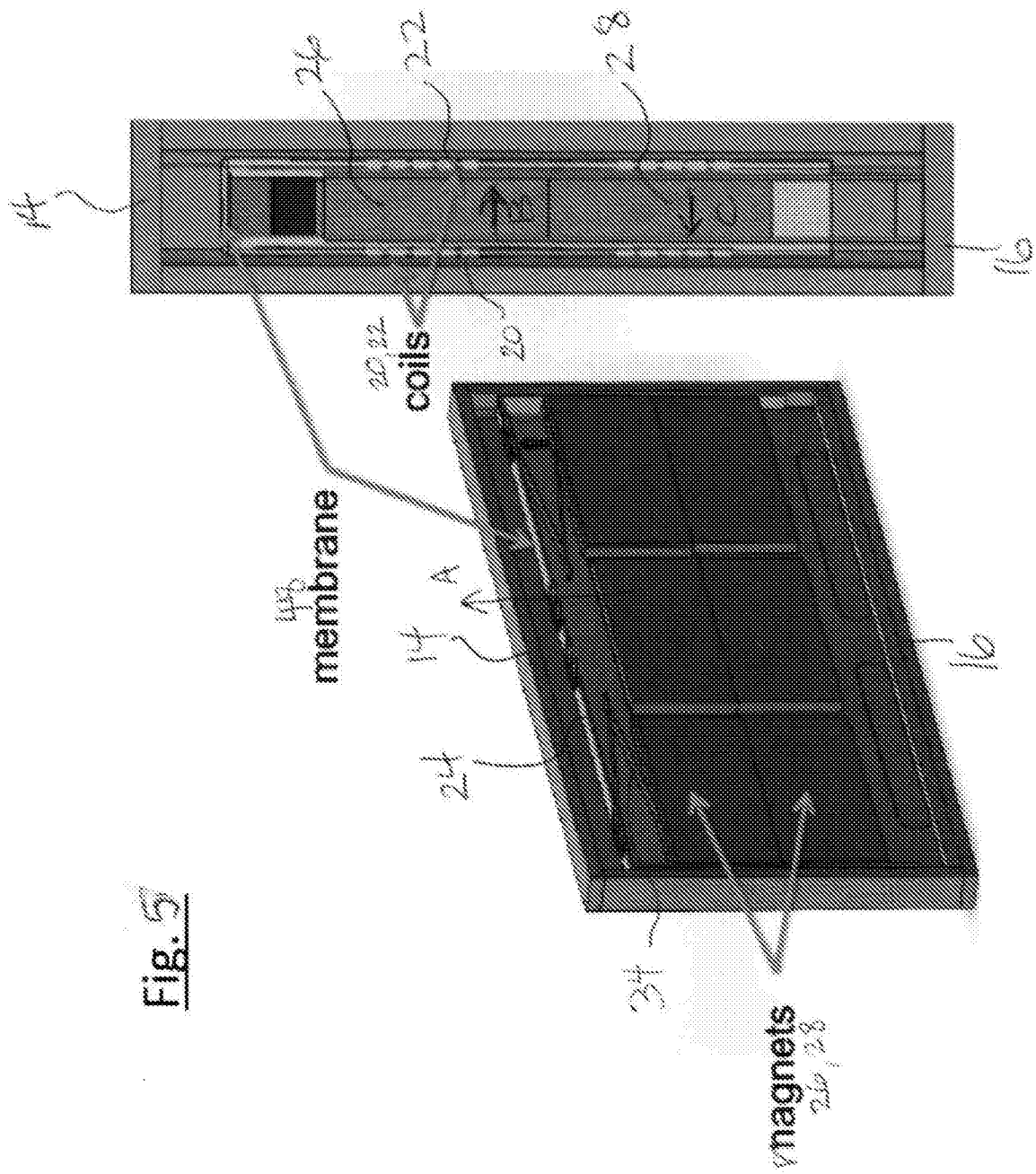
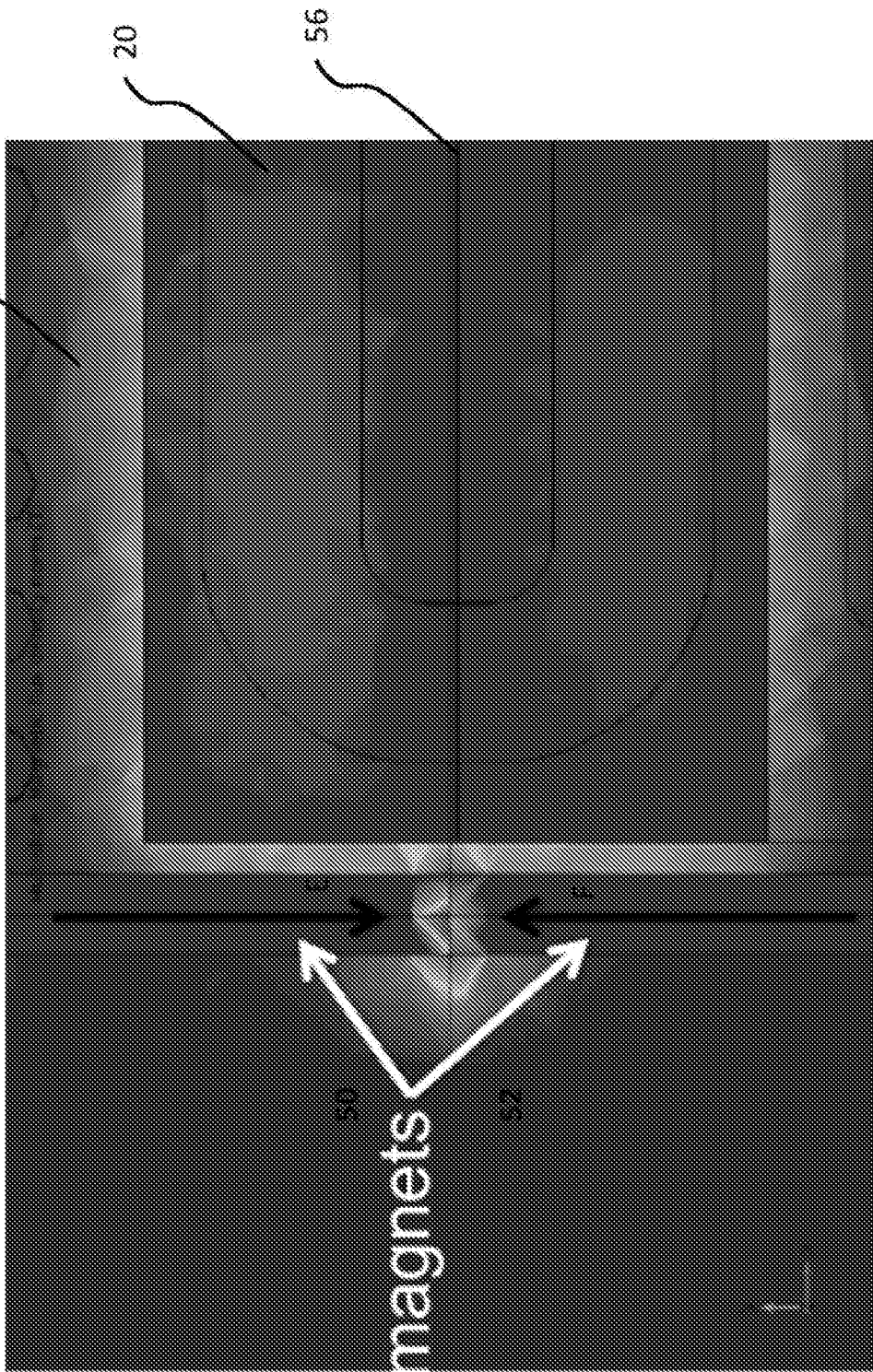


Fig. 5

Fig. 6



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
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A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC(8) - H04R 9/02; G10K 11/165; H01F 1/44; H04R 1/28; H04R 5/02; H04R 7/08; H04R 9/04 (2019.01)
CPC - H04R 9/025; H04R 1/28; H04R 5/02; H04R 9/06; H04R 11/02 (2019.02)

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B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
See Search History document

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched
USPC - 181/207; 381/116; 381/176; 381/395; 381/396; 381/398; 381/400; 381/401; 381/415; 381/421; 381/423 (keyword delimited)

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
See Search History document

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 2012/0051557 A1 (HORIGOME et al) 01 March 2012 (01.03.2012) entire document	1-3, 6-12, 14-16
Y	US 2005/0157904 A1 (STEERE et al) 21 July 2005 (21.07.2005) entire document	1-3, 6-12, 14-16
A	US 2015/0010195 A1 (CROFT, III) 08 January 2015 (08.01.2015) entire document	1-20
A	US 2018/0027332 A1 (MAO et al) 25 January 2018 (25.01.2018) entire document	1-20
A	US 2017/0280247 A1 (PANASONIC INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY MANAGEMENT CO., LTD.) 28 September 2017 (28.09.2017) entire document	1-20

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. See patent family annex.

* Special categories of cited documents:

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Date of mailing of the international search report
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